

**MEETING MINUTES
BERKLEY DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
Wednesday, February 8, 2023, 8:30 AM
Berkley Public Safety, 2nd Floor, Conference Room**



I. CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 8:32 AM with Chair Andy Gilbert presiding.

II. ROLL CALL:

Present: Tim Barnes
Matthew Baumgarten
Chris Gross
Donna Dirkse
Justin Findling
Andy Gilbert
Matteo Passalacqua
Ashley Poirier
Talia Wittenberg
Garrett Wyatt
Brian Zifkin

Absent: Desiree Dutcher – *excused*
Scott Francis – *excused*
Uli Laczkovich – *excused*

Also present: Steve Baker, City Council Liaison
Kristen Kapelanski, Community Development Director
Mike McGuinness, DDA Executive Director
Tim Murad, Chamber of Commerce Liaison
Joel Ulferts, Resident

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

On motion by Zifkin and second by Dirkse, the agenda was unanimously approved by the Board.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Regular Meeting of January 11, 2023

On motion by Zifkin and second by Gross, the minutes of the regular meeting of January 11, 2023 were unanimously approved by the Board. Barnes' absence was corrected to indicate that he was excused.

V. LIAISON REPORTS

A. City Council – Steve Baker

Baker reported that at their 2/6/23 meeting, March was proclaimed "Women's History Month" as well as "Severe Weather Month." New councilperson Greg Patterson and Deputy Clerk Rachel Patterson were sworn in. Council reviewed the application of Little Lou's Hot Chicken for an on-premises liquor license, an ordinance from the Planning Commission to regulate vape shops, and another to allow special use zoning of day care facilities. February had previously been designated as "Black History Month." Baker recounted some old laws several Michigan cities enacted restricting African Americans from staying after dark there. They had been collectively called "sundown towns," and many had deed restrictions regarding Black citizens owning property.

B. Community Development – Kristen Kapelanski

Kapelanski reported that the zoning ordinance will be permanently amended so that portable signs will no longer require a permit. A firm has been contracted to work on revising the zoning ordinance, to incorporate Master Plan and Downtown Master Plan revisions, with \$40,000.00 of the \$90,000.00 cost contributed by the MEDC. Four focus workshops are planned.

C. Planning Commission – Matteo Passalacqua

Passalacqua reported that the Commission is having discussions about allowing day care businesses to operate in corridor districts. They are also reviewing feasibility of sidewalk seating throughout the business district. They have sent Council the vaping ordinance and daycare special use zoning for approvals.

D. Public Works – Shawn Young and Ric Chalmers

Absent – no report. Regarding windrows along the district's roads and corners, Baumgarten reported that it is a goal to eliminate them before they create a hazard for walkers and people parking along the street.

E. Chamber of Commerce – Tim Murad

Murad reported the Chamber has interviewed candidates for their open position in events planning and are entering pay discussions. The kit home tour planning is ongoing.

VI. TREASURER'S REPORT:

A. Financial Report for January 2023

Gross reported that with the Finance Director vacancy, no DDA Financial Report was available. Plante & Moran is currently handling many duties of the Finance Director.

VII. ACTION ITEMS:

A. Election to Fill Board Vice Chair Vacancy

McGuinness noted that Hance (who was serving as Vice Chair) has resigned from the DDA and asked what Board member would be willing to serve in her stead until the next annual election in the summer of 2023. Barnes volunteered and nominated himself. The Vice Chair conducts Board meetings in the Chair's absence.

Barnes nominated and moved to elect Tim Barnes to fill the Board Vice Chair vacancy, Zifkin seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

B. Proposed DDA Budget for Fiscal Year 2023-2024 (second reading)

McGuinness reported the proposed budget is the same as presented at the January meeting but with more specificity as to individual line items. Board members' suggested changes are included as well as an analysis of the DDA's revenue sources.

No Board vote to approve the budget is needed until the next meeting.

C. British Indian Cuisine (formerly Grill and Curry) Façade Grant Application

McGuinness and Gilbert noted discussion about revisions was needed to precede a vote on this and items D., E., and F. (votes on the Façade Grant application and the Mural program applications).

Tootie and Tallulah's building on 12 Mile near Coolidge was recently sold to a business that is doing renovations, and the renovations require removal of the large mural on the east wall of the building. Mural applicants are required to agree to maintain the murals for five years. This mural is less than five years old, and the DDA was one, but not the largest, of the contributors to the original cost, which was extensive. This removal has generated some controversy in the community at large.

After extensive discussion about how to proceed with the mural program as well as the façade grant program, it was agreed to seek legal advice and get information from other communities with similar programs as to their application standards.

Zifkin moved to table a vote on items VII.C., D., E., F., and G. until the next meeting, Passalacqua, seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved by the Board. A special meeting may be called to vote on those items if answers to the Board's questions are received prior to the next monthly meeting.

D. MHG Jewelry Studio Mural Program Application

E. Alice's Perfect Fit Alterations Mural Program Application

F. Chazzano Coffee Roasters Mural Program Application

G. Mural Program Revisions Consideration

See VII.C. above.

VIII. DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Main Street America Annual Evaluation Process

McGuinness reported that Berkley was again accredited by the Main Street America organization, which opens opportunities for additional funding and grants.

B. Parking Study Progress, Community Engagement

Kapelanski reported that their open house on Berkley parking drew @40 attendees, and feedback was mostly positive, with an online survey also available until the end of the month. The steering committee will meet in about a month.

C. Coolidge Complete Streets Enactment, Crosswalks Enhancements

McGuinness reported that the next step will be to determine what Berkley's DPW can do in-house and what needs to be hired out to a vendor. Gilbert expressed urgency to get the bollards put back in the road and the crosswalks functional again; currently, pedestrian safety is severely impacted.

D. Robina North Design Concepts Progress

Passalacqua reported receiving another quotation to complete the bid package for @\$20,000-22,000. The PEA Group has estimated an overall project cost of \$600,000-\$700,000, which would require seeking alternative funding. He hopes to get another estimate so that the Board can decide on what direction to pursue at the March meeting. Zifkin expressed hope that businesses on the west end of 12 Mile won't be shortchanged by the anticipated large cost of the Robina project. For example, that area still lacks hanging flower baskets.

E. Downtown Promotional Efforts for March

No report.

IX. STUDENT BOARD MEMBER UPDATES

No report.

X. BOARD COMMITTEE UPDATES:

A. Art & Design Committee – Matteo Passalacqua

No report.

B. Business Development Committee

No report.

C. Downtown Events Committee

No report.

D. Marketing Strategies Committee – Ashley Poirier

No report.

E. Organization Committee – Scott Francis

Absent – no report.

F. West 12-Mile Committee – Brian Zifkin

No report.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR UPDATES

No report.

XI. BOARD OF DIRECTORS' COMMENTS:

No additional comments.

XII. PUBLIC COMMENTS: The opportunity for public comment was offered. Gilbert asked that anyone with comments or questions e-mail them to the DDA to be answered within five business days.

Joel Ulferts had questions about the crosswalk, including costs, overhead, whether cost sharing was available, and other questions and comments about the DDA and City budgets. He would email McGuinness to continue the discussion.

XIII. Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 9:43 AM on motion by Zifkin and second by Barnes.